

**REMARKS**

This Amendment responds to the office action dated January 14, 2005.

The Examiner has allowed claims 18 and 19. The Examiner objected to claims 10 and 15-17, indicating that they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 10 and 15-17 have been rewritten as new claims 28-31, which should be allowable.

The Examiner rejected claims 9, 11, and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Lee, U.S. Patent No. 6,226,050. Independent claim 9 has been amended to include the limitation of “detecting an approximate direction of an image edge in a block of image pixels and establishing a filtering axis relatively parallel to said direction.” Dependent claims 11 and 14 depends from claim 9 and therefore also includes this limitation, which is not disclosed by Lee. Though Lee discloses an edge detection method, Lee does not disclose detecting any approximate direction of such edges, nor establishing a filtering axis relatively parallel to a detected approximate direction of an edge. Therefore, each of claims 9, 11, and 14 patentably distinguish over Lee and should be allowable.


The Examiner rejected claims 1-2, 4, and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Lee, discussed previously, and Simpson, U.S. Patent No. 5,754,702. Independent claim 1 has been amended to include the limitation of “detecting an approximate direction of an image edge in a block of image pixels and establishing a filtering axis relatively parallel to said direction.” Neither Lee nor Simpson disclose this limitation, hence claim 1, as well as its dependent claims 2, 4, and 8 are each patentably distinguished over the cited combination and should be allowable.

The Examiner rejected claims 3, 5-7, and 20-27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Lee and Borer, U.S. Patent No. 6,069,670. With respect to claims 3 and 5-7, each of these claims depend from independent claim 1, which as stated previously, has been amended to distinguish over the cited prior art and should be allowable. Similarly, independent claim 20, from which claims 21-27 depend, has been amended to include the limitation of “detecting an approximate direction of an image edge in a block of image pixels

Appl. No. 09/541,141  
Amdt. dated June 7, 2005  
Reply to Office action of January 14, 2005

and establishing a filtering axis relatively parallel to said edge . . ." Neither of the cited references include this limitation. Accordingly, claims 20-27 also distinguish over the cited combination and should be allowable.

Respectfully submitted,  
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